



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs
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USDA SEEKS PUBLIC COMMENT ON DEREGULATION OF GENETICALLY ENGINEERED COTTON

WASHINGTON, June 17, 2008--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is seeking public comment on a petition to deregulate cotton line GHB614, which is genetically engineered (GE) for tolerance to the herbicide glyphosate.

The petition for deregulation, submitted by Bayer CropScience (BCS), is in accordance with APHIS' regulations concerning the introduction of GE organisms and products. APHIS has prepared a draft environmental assessment (EA) to determine whether deregulating the cotton could have a significant impact on the environment. After a thorough review of the scientific evidence, APHIS' current preferred action is to deregulate the cotton based on the fact that it does not present a plant-pest risk.

If APHIS grants the petition for deregulation, the cotton and its progeny would no longer be regulated articles. The product could then be moved freely and planted without the requirement of permits or other regulatory oversight by APHIS.

GHB614 is also subject to regulation by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Food and Drug Administration (FDA). BCS has submitted the appropriate documents to both EPA and FDA to address those agencies' regulations.

APHIS oversees the development and introduction (importation, interstate movement and environmental release) of GE organisms. APHIS regulates GE products in cooperation with FDA and EPA. Products are regulated according to their intended use, with some products regulated under more than one agency.

APHIS has been safely regulating GE organisms since 1986 and has overseen the deregulation of more than 70 GE crop lines.

This action is scheduled for publication in the June 18 *Federal Register*.

Consideration will be given to comments received on or before Aug. 18. Send two copies of postal mail or commercial delivery comments to Docket No. APHIS-2007-0017 Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3A-03.8, 4700 River Road, Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238. Comments can be submitted on the Federal eRulemaking portal at <http://www.regulations.gov/fdmspublic/component/main?main=DocketDetail&d=APHIS-2007-0017>.

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Comments are posted on the Regulations.gov Web site and also can be reviewed at USDA, Room 1141, South Building, 14th St. and Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. To facilitate entry into the comment reading room, please call (202) 690-2817.

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